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On Guard: Preventing and Responding to Child Abuse at Church

Deepak Reju

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Predator in the Pews,/p>

"Jimmy" joined the church a year ago. Before long, he volunteered to teach a Sunday School class and got to know eight-year-old Peter. Things started innocently. A hug at the end of class. Gifts for Peter. Lots of extra attention. And then it happened. Jimmy took advantage of Peter.

Since Sandusky and the scandals in the Catholic Church, the issue of sexual abuse has shifted to the forefront of our collective mind. Many churches are poised for action but unsure of what action to take.

In *On Guard*, Deepak Reju examines why child predators target churches and offers eleven straightforward strategies to protect children from abuse and to help young victims recover if it does happen. While *On Guard* does provide practical help for building a child protection policy, it provides much more. Full of pastoral wisdom, *On Guard* recognizes that the church s response to abuse must be more comprehensive in line with her calling than a simple legal policy or clinical analysis. *On Guard*moves church staff and leaders beyond fearful awareness to prayerful preparedness with an actionable plan.

Church, be on guard! Child abuse can happen anywhere, and we need a plan for how to prevent and respond to it. What s yours?

On Guard is:

Timely: Since Sandusky and the scandals in the Catholic Church, the issue of sexual abuse has shifted to the forefront of our collective mind. Churches are poised for action, but unsure of what action to take.

Actionable: *On Guard* moves church staff and leaders beyond fearful awareness to prayerful preparedness with a practical plan.

Holistic: On Guard is full of pastoral wisdom, recognizing that the church s response to abuse must be more comprehensive in line with her calling than a simple legal policy or clinical analysis.

Child Protection Policy: Equips church staff to build the child protection policy that s right for an individual congregation and provides sample material.

Sensitive: Presents difficult material clearly, but is not unnecessarily graphic.

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